

## APPROVED

### Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee

March 6, 2008, 7:30 pm, Peabody School Forum

Members present: Harry Beyer, Gerry Boyle, Elissa Brown, Jim Coutre, Dinny McIntyre, Ken Miller, Barbara Pike, Andrea Siani (moderator), Jim Terry

Recorder: Barbara Pike (clerk)

Members absent: none

Others present: Marcia Rasmussen and a number of citizens

A summary of recent changes to the 25% design was presented.

- a) The surface of the unpaved portion of the trail has been specified as stabilized aggregate.
- b) One handicapped parking spot has been placed adjacent to the trail at Williams Road.
- c) The trail parking lot near the MBTA in West Concord will be paved with asphalt.
- d) The design of the bridge over the Assabet River has been changed to make it more aesthetically pleasing.
- e) The paved skirts at dirt road crossing will be shorter.
- f) The emergency access at Williams Road has been removed.
- g) The emergency vehicle access ramp from Powder Mill Road has been deleted and a pedestrian/bicycle ramp has been added to the northwest side of Powder Mill Road.
- h) Rest stops have been added in the Jenny Dugan swamp area (marker 55) and near the prison cemetery (marker 168).
- i) A restroom will be located at the north end of the trail parking lot which is located near the MBTA station.
- j) The center line of the trail has been moved further from the residences on Cottage and Derby Streets.
- k) The trail will have a break in West Concord center from approximately Commonwealth Ave to the south side of Main Street.

A question and answer session followed.

Q: Why will there be a paved, ADA-compliant ramp to the trail from Powder Mill Road?

A: The neighborhood requested access to the trail, and it will be ADA compliant to make it accessible to all trail users. There is already a paved sidewalk along Powder Mill Road that would provide access to the ramp. Powder Mill Road is currently the temporary terminus of the trail in Concord.

Q: When will the complete 25% design document, with all appendices, be available to the public.

A: It is now available at both libraries and at the Department of Planning.

Q: Why are the 3 parts of the trail in Concord labeled "Phases 1, 2, and 3" when they will not be constructed in that order.

A: The survey started at the Sudbury line. Therefore the references begin numerically at "0" at the Sudbury line and increase toward the north. The labels could be replaced with different ones.

Q: What are the comparative costs of stabilized soil and asphalt?

A: Although this information is contained in the appendix, the Advisory Committee will create more user-friendly tables. **(Action item)**

Q: What bearing does approval of the 25% design have on the possibility of extending Beharrel Street to Commonwealth Ave.?

A: None. It has nothing to do with the rail trail.

Q: What would be required to extend Beharrel Street?

A: There would be extensive hurdles to clear in order to do this. It would involve takings of private property and coordination with property owners. It has been discussed for at least 20 years, but has never progressed beyond the discussion stage.

Q: How will the Rotary reconstruction project be coordinated with the rail trail?

A: The state is aware of plans to construct the rail trail near the Rotary and will coordinate with the Town's plans for the rail trail. The Mass Highway map of the project limits clearly shows the existing rail trail right of way.

Q: Will cost estimates change with these recent design changes?

A: Marcia will find out. **(Action item)**

Q: How will it be determined which trees will receive special protection during construction?

A: Protecting specific trees will be addressed in the construction specification phase.

Q: What is the source of funds for constructing the rail trail?

A: If MassHighway funds the project as is likely, the Town is expected to pay for the design of the trail, which is generally about 10% of the total cost. The state will pay 10% and the federal government will pay 80% of the total cost of building the trail.

Q: Will there be parking on Powder Mill Road?

A: No, the committee has not recommended any parking on Powder Mill Road.

Q: How much clearing will be needed near the road intersections?

A: Clearing near some road crossings is necessary to make the trail safe. More work is needed to determine the clearing that will be required.

Q: Could a private property owner construct a fence that would interfere with the sight lines at road crossings?

A: Such a fence would involve the zoning bylaws. Consultation with the Building Commissioner is recommended.

Q: Why was the emergency access from Williams Road eliminated?

A: It was not necessary since emergency vehicles could access the trail from the road which services the light plant.

Q: Why was it decided not to include replacement of the culvert under Powder Mill Road in the 25% design? Why did the consultants provide replacement cost information?

A: According to the Town Engineer, the culvert is structurally sound. It is not needed for emergency vehicle access, since there will be access points at Williams Road and from Route 117 (when the southern section of the trail is built). It would be expensive to replace. The cost information was requested by the Advisory Committee.

Q: Will there be coordination between the Village Overlay, the rail trail, and the Rotary reconstruction?

A: Yes, and this coordination will be continuing.

Q: Why wasn't a boardwalk through the Jenny Dugan Swamp area included in the design?

A: There is already an elevated rail bed; board walks are used over low or wet areas. Construction over wetlands required for board walk could have an adverse effect on the swamp.

Q: Why is there a rest area in the Jenny Dugan area?

A: A rest stop was requested by the Committee in that area to provide a rest area at a suitable distance from the other planned rest stops. It was placed at marker 55 as an alternative to the rest area originally planned for the White Pond area. No adverse impact on wildlife is anticipated.

by creating a small rest area, and it would give trail users the opportunity for nature appreciation.

Q: Has a budget and schedule been created for trail and restroom maintenance?

A: Maintenance costs will be further refined in the later design phases. It is premature at this time. The planned rest room will not be specific to the rail trail; maintenance might be shared by others.

Q: Could you explain the design speed for the trail?

A: Design speed is a safety issue, not the anticipated user speed.

Q: When we submit the 25% design to the state, will we be giving the state additional control over the roads in Town?

A: No. The state, through the Executive Office of Transportation (EOT), already owns the right of way. The Town has had significant input into the design of other projects. Examples are the commuter parking lot of West Concord and the rebuilding of Route 62. The Town will not be giving the state an opening for any more or less control.

Q: What kind of signage will be used on the trail?

A: Signage is a critical component of the final design of the trail. There are many possibilities for appropriate signage, and they will be investigated in greater detail at a later stage in the trail design.

Q: What type of usage is expected?

A: A wide variety of trail users is expected. There will be no restrictions on the types of cyclists who may use the trail.

Q: What was the process for making the decision on surface materials.

A: The committee considered citizen input, visits to other trails, and information from the consultants. The decision was a compromise.

Q: Will there be additional fencing in the White Pond area?

A: Abutter and privacy issues will be addressed in later design stages.

Q: Does Concord anticipate that our trail will be used by as many "high-speed" bicyclists as the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway?

A: The Minuteman was designed to be used as an off-road east-west commuter path connecting suburbs with Cambridge and Boston. Usage of the Bruce Freeman, which runs north and south and goes through communities much less densely populated, will be more similar to the Nashua River Rail Trail.

Q: What is the time line for the project?

A: First the Town must submit the Project Needs Form (PNF) and the 25% design to the state. Their review can take several months. The Town will also need funds for the 75% design. The entire process can take several years.

Citizen comments received from: Jack Sheehan, Susan Birge, Jane Cullinane, Matt Johnson, Dick Waters, George Bernard, Holly Boyle, Hugh Lauer, Anne Shapiro, Lydia Rogers, Bill Gluck, Kimberly Drake, Jane Coutre, and Dorcas Miller.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm